

South Atlantic
Temporary Management Measures for Species in the Deep-Water Complex, Including
Blueline Tilefish, in the South Atlantic
Frequently Asked Questions
April 2014

What species are in the Deep-Water Complex?

- Yellowedge grouper, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, black snapper, and blackfin snapper.
- Blueline tilefish has been temporarily removed from the Deep-Water Complex.

What has been implemented by NOAA Fisheries?

- For species in the Deep-Water Complex in the South Atlantic, temporary annual catch limits of 60,371 and 19,313 pounds whole weight for the commercial and recreational sectors, respectively.
- For blueline tilefish in the South Atlantic, temporary annual catch limits of 112,207 and 111,893 pounds whole weight for the commercial and recreational sectors, respectively.
- Harvest of blueline tilefish by the commercial and recreational sectors will be prohibited, in-season, if the sectors' annual catch limits are projected to be met.

Why are the management measures temporary?

- The law governing fishery management actions in the United States, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, allows NOAA Fisheries to implement temporary management measures through emergency action.
- In December 2013, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council requested NOAA Fisheries take emergency action to reduce fishing pressure of blueline tilefish.

How long will the temporary management measures be in place?

- The temporary management measures were implemented on April 17, 2014. The temporary management measures will be in place for 180 days and may be extended for 186 additional days.
- NOAA Fisheries will notify the public if the temporary measures are extended.

Why have the management measures for blueline tilefish been changed?

- A stock assessment completed in October 2013 determined that the blueline tilefish population in the South Atlantic is experiencing overfishing (fishing pressure too high) and is overfished (population too low).
- In December 2013, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council requested that NOAA Fisheries implement temporary action through emergency rule to specify annual catch limits for blueline tilefish.
- The goal is to reduce fishing pressure while the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries develop and implement management measures to end overfishing and rebuild the blueline tilefish population.

Why have the management measures for the Deep-Water Complex been changed?

- This change is necessary as blueline tilefish has been temporarily removed from the Deep-Water Complex.
- The annual catch limits reflect the current annual catch limits for the Deep-Water Complex with the blueline tilefish portion of the annual catch limits removed.

How do I submit comments?

- Comments on the temporary rule through emergency action must be received on or before May 19, 2014. You may submit comments either electronically or through mail.

Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

Go to: www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0027

Click on “Comment Now!” Complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments. Attachments to electronic comments (up to 10 MB) will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

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